

18. (Amended) A tissue culture comprising a blood vessel having endothelial cells which have been recombinantly engineered to express endoglin protein or Alk-1 protein encoded by an exogenously supplied polynucleotide, whereby expression of said endoglin or Alk-1 protein promotes TGF β signal transduction in said cells in response to a TGF β ligand.

19. (Reiterated) A blood vessel in accordance with claim 18, wherein the vessel is a section of a mammalian vein.

20. (Reiterated) A blood vessel in accordance with claim 19, wherein the vessel is a section of a human vein.

21. (Reiterated) A blood vessel in accordance with claim 20, wherein the vessel is a section of a saphenous vein.

Please add the following new claims:

24. (NEW) The blood vessel of claim 18, wherein said exogenously supplied polynucleotide is contained within an expression vector.

25. (NEW) The blood vessel of claim 24, wherein said expression vector is a viral vector.

26. (NEW) The blood vessel of claim 25, wherein said viral vector is selected from an adenoviral vector, a retroviral vector, a herpesviral vector, a pox viral vector, or an adeno-associated viral vector.

The claims presented above incorporate changes as indicated by the marked-up versions below.

18. (Amended) A tissue culture comprising a blood vessel having ,~~comprising~~ endothelial cells ~~comprising an exogenously supplied polynucleotide encoding~~ which have been